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Voting for Gary Johnson

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Voting for Gary Johnson

Abstract

"Governor Johnson's fiscally conservative views, and socially liberal views give him a unique space for common ground in a divided Congress."

Posting about this year's Libertarian party candidate for president from *In All Things* - an online hub committed to the claim that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ has implications for the entire world.

<http://inallthings.org/voting-for-johnson/>

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Comments

In All Things is a publication of the [Andreas Center for Reformed Scholarship and Service](#) at Dordt College.

Voting for Gary Johnson

 [all in allthings.org/voting-for-johnson/](http://allthings.org/voting-for-johnson/)

Adam Adams

November 1,
2016

Leading up to Election Day on November 8, iAt will be sharing more articles providing different perspectives on specific presidential candidates, as well as thoughts on voting for the first time and why one contributor has decided not to vote for a presidential candidate. Come back to iAt regularly for more insights on exploring the implications of Christ's presence in all facets of life.

It is hard for me to fathom the USA is a nation with shopping aisles full of shampoo and cereal choices, yet we insist that only two political parties can produce qualified presidential candidates. If we are willing to search far and wide for something as inconsequential as how our hair smells after washing it, how can we not also diligently search for one of the most powerful people in the world? Surely this election cycle has shown the numerous differences within each party, and between each party. A likely response to this turmoil is a third party rising in national prominence.

I'm surprised that my generation, and those that come after mine, venerate obscure music, independent films, micro coffee roasters, and buy things from Etsy and Kickstarter...yet in November many voters will choose a candidate from the political versions of Wal-Mart or McDonald's because there is no other "viable" option. After the trauma of this election cycle winds down, we will start the process over again, hoping these two groups will provide something better four years down the road. Every four years we are even farther from Lincoln or Roosevelt, and unsolved problems from president's past continue to compound, requiring even more complexity to solve. Adding an additional voice to the conversation is necessary.

In an early Republican primary debate in 2011, Gary Johnson caught my attention with the comment "My neighbor's two dogs have created more shovel ready jobs than the current administration." Because of the humor of this comment, I started to pay more attention to Mr. Johnson. For me, he was an early favorite to be on the Republican ticket in 2012. Ultimately, he left the Republican party to campaign for the Libertarian nomination, and as I watched the continued developments in the Republican party, my vote went with him. It took even less time this cycle to choose to vote for Gary.

How could I support someone with "liberal" ideas, or choose to vote for a man willing to decriminalize drugs? I have determined that I will always allow my faith to inform my vote, but I do not want the government to infringe on my faith. This necessarily means that some things I find morally objectionable may continue to be permissible by law.

Fortunately, the difficulties found in fighting the decrees of a faceless government, are effectively addressed through personal relationships with our neighbors. In my opinion, genuine commitment to seeking the welfare of our communities, through meaningful engagement with our neighbors, is a more effective way to see lives changed than by expecting legislation, or legislators, to do anything. The church has the potential to be nimbler in approaching the changes and calamities we see in our local community by actively engaging culture, than by waiting on legislation to be drafted against what happens around us.

My political disagreements with Governor Johnson are areas where I believe I have the most opportunity to engage my community as an individual and in the context of my local church. I have volunteered in after-school programs. I have tutored "at-risk" students. I have known the stories of my migrant and refugee neighbors. I believe these activities, which any American, in any community can do, are solid steps in helping kids make decisions about drugs, sex, and violent activity. Engaging our community provides a familiar face to help a kid after a bad decision was made. Even though Governor Johnson is politically pro-choice, and will work toward ending the war on drugs, I believe these two conservative talking points that have seen little positive change in the last 40 years are better addressed at a neighbor and community level. One key component for making all of this work is for the church to define some terms. Inviting neighbors to our buildings and our programs should only come after actively engaging

our neighbors in real life. When we confuse an invitation with engagement, we won't see the results we desire.

So, why does Gary Johnson get my vote? First, I believe he has far more integrity than the current Republican or Democrat candidates. In this campaign, his integrity and honesty have been used against him to show him lacking in foreign affairs knowledge. He has freely admitted mistakes, which has been seldom seen elsewhere. Additionally, when these same questions have been brought up a second time by a different reporter, he's been prepared to respond to the question and address his first failing at answering the question. I appreciate this because I believe it shows he is actively owning shortcomings, learning from them, and moving forward.

Secondly, his experience as a governor in a border state will help address our nation's need for immigration reform. Governors understand the executive branch, and the need to work with Congress to have effective legislation written. Governor Johnson's fiscally conservative views, and socially liberal views give him a unique space for common ground in a divided Congress.

Third, he has admirable personal qualities. He is a successful businessman and entrepreneur. He didn't start with a family member's money. He built a successful business, sold the business, and can enjoy his success. We need examples like this. Hiring and firing are challenging tasks. Thinking tactically and strategically come from years of navigating business challenges, and Governor Johnson proved his ability at these things in his two terms in New Mexico.

Part of his success in business comes from his tenacity in sports. Being an extreme athlete does not make Governor Johnson presidential, but it demonstrates qualities needed in a leader. He's climbed the tallest mountains on each continent, including Everest. He's run ultra-marathons and competed in the Ironman championships in Hawaii. Each of these events require physical strength, stamina, persistence, optimism, and mental focus. He has the health to endure the rigors of a presidency.

Gary's experience, honesty and humility have allowed him to articulate that his Libertarian ideals may not pass immediately through Congress, but they provide a new starting place for important conversations. He has the ability to engage Capitol Hill in ways no president in recent memory has been able to do. I appreciate that he desires to work with Congress, and not around Congress by executive order.

If you are considering voting beyond the mainstream parties for the first time, I encourage you to consider Governor Johnson. He has the traditional political experience to engage Congress, and the confidence in his vision to constitutionally lead our nation.